Self Care As a Means of Enhancing Teamwork and Customer Care!

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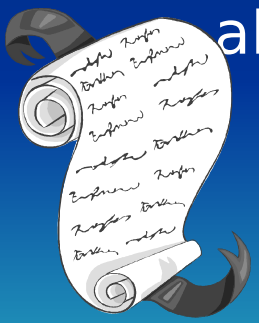
DISCLAIMER

The information in this presentation is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace guidance from your healthcare provider. You know what is best for you and your situation. If in doubt, consult with a qualified healthcare professional.

The views expressed in this presentation are those of the presenter and necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Department of Defense, or the United States Government.

OBJECTIVE

- Providers of customer care to military personnel and their family members, just like those to civilian communities, may be in a position of vulnerability to compassion fatigue, *vicarious traumatization,* and burnout. If our customer care/customer service personnel are impaired, our ability to intervene early and assist beneficiaries with problems may be hampered. This powerful workshop offers reasons for giving up the idea of taking care of the rest of the world at the cost of self-sacrifice. Attendees will be able to:
  - recognize the value of self-care
  - describe four types of stress
  - identify at least ten self-care strategies

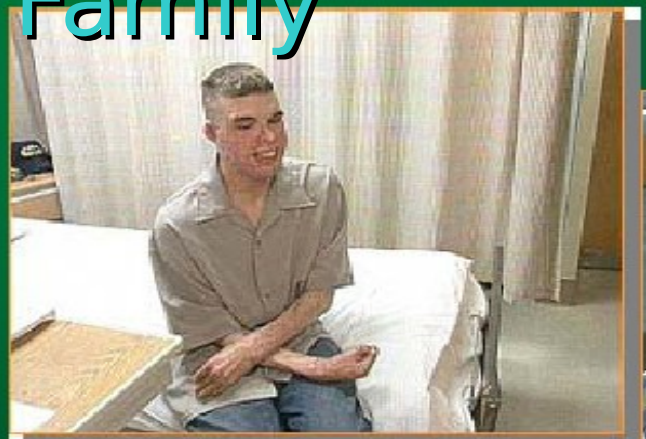


Challenges of Military Life

- M-
- I-
- L-
- I-
- T-
- A-
- R-
- Y-

Facing the Unexpected

Faces of the War… Wounded and Family



Confronting the Ultimate Sacrifice

Definitions

- ***Empathy:*** To see from the other persons point of view, to “walk in his shoes” for a while
- ***Compassion Fatigue:*** A state of exhaustion and dysfunction brought on by prolonged exposure to compassion and all that it evokes. Combined effect of caregivers/helper continuous visualizing of patients/clients traumatic images + effects of burnout=progressively debilitating symptoms

Definitions

- ***Vicarious Traumatization*:** Transmission of traumatic stress through observation/hearing others stories of traumatic events.
- ***Burnout***: Is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing your job effectively. These negative feelings usually have a gradual onset. They can reflect the feeling that your efforts make no difference, or they can be associated with a very high workload or a non supportive work environment.

Definitions

- ***Self-care:*** Uncompromising focus on one's body, mind and spirit.
  - *Same qualities that allow us to do a good job can lead us to burnout.*
  - Prerequisite: must give up the idea of taking care of the rest of the world at the cost of self-sacrifice.
- ***Resilience:*** Personal qualities, skills and practices that serve to enable a caregiver to maintain meaning and effectiveness overtime time through a series of stressful events

25 Warning Signs that Self-Care is Lacking

- Being more defensive that usual
- Moving moment to moment in a state of constant stress
- A lack of energy
- Feeling less creative
- Being less resourceful at finding solutions
- Feeling stuck and having no idea how to get moving
- Exercise is missing as a part of your daily routine
- Life is defined by the external flow of events in your life rather than by your internal rhythm
- Using the words, *I can't, yeah but, I should* often throughout the day
- Experiencing more frequent illnesses
- Becoming stiff physically and mentally
- Finding yourself more clumsy that usual
- Being overly sensitive

Source: Woods, Corrie. (2008) ***The Woman's Field Guide to Exceptional Living***

25 Warning Signs that Self-Care is Lacking
(Cont.)

- The ability to write a list a mile long of ways you serve others and being hard pressed to name a few ways your serve yourself

- Shallow breathing is your regular way of breathing
- Yearning for something but being unable to name it
- Refusal to ask for help or support
- Negative self-talk
- Life is cluttered on all fronts –home, office, closets, too many “to do's”
- Lack of healthy personal boundaries
- Spending very little time in nature
- Being unwilling to let something go
- The thought, *“I could never take time just for me.”*
- Having a self-critical attitude
- Lots of change has life feeling upside down

Source: Woods, Corrie. (2008) ***The Woman's Field Guide to Exceptional Living***

Work Performance: Warning Signs that Self-Care is Lacking

- Low morale and motivation
- Late for work
- Errors in judgment
- Poor communication
- Staff Conflicts
- Apathy
- Absenteeism
- Withdrawal

TYPES OF STRESS…

1. **Eustress**

   Positive; short-term; provides immediate strength--points of increased physical activity, enthusiasm, creativity, inspiration

2. **Distress**

   Negative; resulting from constant readjustments or alterations in routine; feelings of discomfort and unfamiliarity

   2 types : Acute and Chronic

3. **Hyperstress**

   pushed beyond what one can handle; overloaded/overworked;

   even little things trigger strong emotional response.

4. **Hypostress**

   individual bored/unchallenged/restless/uninspired

Think About It!

If you always do what you have always done,

You will always get what you have always got!

-Stephen Covey

1. LEARN TO LOVE YOURSELF

"*To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance.“*

2. CHECK YOURSELF

(Before You Wreck Yourself)

3. INVITE THE CHILD WITHIN TO COME OUT AND PLAY

- Balance is the Key!

4. Establish Guilt-Free Zones

- Establish good boundaries
- Check personal motives
- Accept whatever feelings you are having

5. LET'S GET PHYSICAL!

- Most Americans are not physically active!
  - We "don't have to work up a big sweat at the gym or become a long-distance runner. Just 30 minutes of walking a day, five days a week, can significantly improve your health". *Source: Dept of Health and Human Services*
  - "Not only does regular exercise improve physical problems such as high cholesterol, diabetes and high blood pressure, but it has distinct mood and cognitive advantages as well, including an ability to boost higher-level thinking and to combat depression and anxiety". *Source: Duke University researchers Michael Babyak, PhD, and James Blumenthal, PhD*

6. Eat, Drink, Rest & Be Happy!

- Sit down and enjoy a proper meal
- Drink plenty of water
  - The well-hydrated body eliminates concentrated toxins that
    can lead to failing health.
- Sleep
  - “63% of Americans get less sleep than they did 5 yrs ago…”
- Smile and mean it
  - Think about good things and blessings in your life
- Laughter is the best medicine
  - “2 min of "belly laughter“= 10 min on a rowing machine”

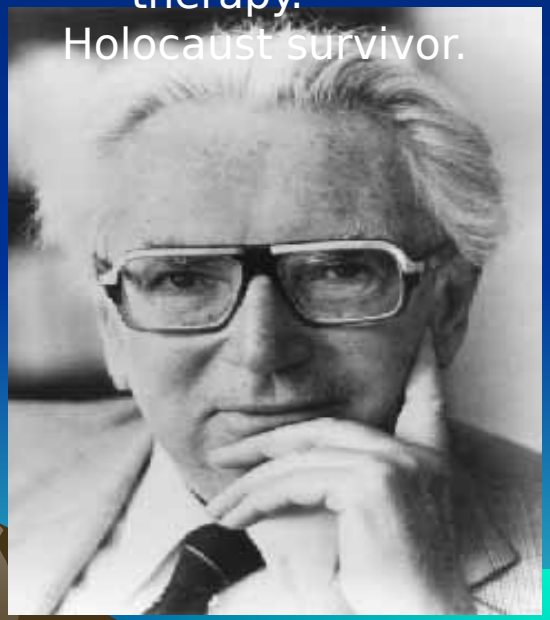
7. GET A NEW PLAN

- Work on immediate things you can control.

8. Nurture A Sense Of Meaning And Purpose In Your Life And Work

Mar 26, 1905- Sept 2, 1997
Author of
Man's Search for Meaning

& 32 psycho-spiritual books.
Developer of existential psychology and logo-therapy.
Holocaust survivor.



- *"The meaning of life is found in every moment of living; life never ceases to have meaning, even in suffering and death".*
  - "Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission in life; everyone must carry out a concrete assignment that demands fulfillment. Therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated, thus, everyone's task is unique as his specific opportunity to implement it".

Victor Frankl

9. Make Work Enjoyable!

- Stop for lunch, or at least a break, everyday
- Develop a buddy system
- Reach out to others
  - People do care give them a chance
- Help Co-workers as much as possible
  - Check how they are feeling
  - Encourage them to join a group or seek help if needed.
- Keep things uncluttered and calm.
- Take vacations!

10. SURRENDER

- Forgive yourself and others!
- Make time/space for emotional pleasure
  - Upsetting times can cause people to drink alcohol or use drugs creating other problems. Be careful of numbing the pain with overuse of drugs and alcohol.
  - Recognize potential in yourself and those around you
- Don’t let stress be an excuse for abuse

11. Believe in a Higher Power

- The “Faith Factor”
  - Set aside time to maintain your spirituality

12. GET A DOG

- Studies have shown that pet owners experience less stress and even lower mortality rates after a heart attack compared to those who do not own a pet.
- Animal assisted therapy offer health care professionals a unique treatment tool to work with hard-to-reach clients.

“Never let yesterday use up too much of today”

- Negative echoes of the past
- "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” ***~Eleanor Roosevelt***

Seek Professional Help When You are...

- Thinking about doing harm to yourself/others
- Relying heavily on alcohol/other substances
- Feeling extremely sad, hopeless or worthless
- Experiencing any signs/symptoms of stress to the point where it is frightening or distressing you.
- Getting feedback from family/friends expressing concern about your well being and advising you to seek help
- Experiencing major changes in sleeping/eating habits
- In need of someone to talk to about your experiences and feelings
- No longer taking care of yourself

Final Thoughts

- Self-care is not a secondary issue—it is essential to taking great care of others.
- No degree of training, personal maturity, perfection of skills, or personal virtue can protect an isolated and unsupported worker in any discipline from compassion fatigue or burnout.
- In public health terms a well functioning team provides secondary prevention: Support team members and co-workers!

We are all in this together!

"Commit to Excellence"

During a naval battle in WWII, the USS Astoria (C-34) was sunk. Signalman Elgin Staples was swept overboard. The wounded sailor was keep afloat by a narrow life belt that he managed to activate with a simple trigger mechanism. For two days the lifebelt kept Staples safe until he was rescued by another U.S. ship. On board, Staples discovered that the lifebelt that saved him was made by Firestone at the plant his mother worked at. After further inquiry, Staples learned the lifebelt had his mother's personal code on it. A number affixed to every item she was responsible for approving. (Eric Berryman)

Are you committed to excellence? Make sure you perform your best in whatever your duty. You'll never know for sure who will depend on it! Point of Connection: Excellence is the unlimited ability to improve the quality of what you have to offer. (Rick Patino)

– Chaplain Tate, 4/11/2011 Deckplate Devotional

QUESTIONS

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Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share a moment in your life and educational experience!
Take care of yourself!

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